The Tears of Jesus.

By the REV. H. G. BATTERSON, D.D.

"And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it."—*St. Luke xix. 41.*

THE tears of JESUS! What the secret woe
Which caused the Son of GOD to weep, as erst
His eyes looked on the radiant beauty of
The City of His love, all glorious with
Its glittering pinnacles of light?
JERUSALEM! The vision bright of Peace;
The hill of Zion, from whence comes all good
To man! "Salvation cometh of the Jews."

Like a fair bride in festal splendor robed,
Her streets are decked with garlands for the feast;
The waving Palms—the sign of victory;
The loud acclaim, "Hosanna"! yet again
"Hosanna"! and the surging crowd pours forth
With shout triumphal, while "Hosanna"! still
Rings through the air in welcome to a King!
No sound of brazen trumpet racks the ear;
No pomp, no grandeur of an earthly pride;

But meek and lowly—eyes bedewed with tears,
The rightful Monarch comes to claim His own!
The dark, deep green of Kedron's sunny vale;
The plains of Jericho, in broad expanse
Beyond the Mount of Olives lay; and far,
Far in the distance, stood the purple hills
Of Moab, whence the blessing came from one
Who would have cursed, but GOD withheld the voice,
And thrice into a blessing turned his words.

The city, basking in the glory of
That Eastern sky, uplifted proud and high
Its stately palaces and gleaming walls,
As if in welcome to the gath'ring tribes
Fast coming up to keep within its gates
The Passover of GOD.

The Temple, with
Its more than regal beauty, stood alone,
And flashed its golden glory in the light
Which bathed its courts and groves with sweet and soft
Effulgence. O, how bright the scene that lay
Before those tear-dimmed eyes! The busy hum
Of preparation for the feast went on,
And cloudy pillars of dark smoke rose up
To tell of burning sacrifice for sin.
The hosts of fair Judea's land had come
(As was their custom year by year) to pay
Their vows to Israel's God.

And JESUS wept!
Where lay the secret of the tears which stained
The Face of Him, Whose over-flowing Heart
Yearned with a mighty love, and such deep, full,
And sweet compassion for the chosen ones
Of GOD?

Their "Day of Visitation" came,
And yet they knew it not. Their tithes of mint
And anise, and sweet herbs of lesser kind,
They paid with strictness, but neglected all

The weightier matters of the law, and left
The Sacred Temple of their God to be
Defiled by those who made of righteousness
A gain, until their coffers groaned with gold.
A den of thieves the House of Prayer was made;
And sin ran riot, while the Priests of God
Hushed the Prophetic Voice, and hand joined hand
In all forbidden things. The loud-voiced prayers
Of Scribe and Pharisee rose up to heaven,
While yet they mocked in pride th' Anointed One
Who came in such humility, to draw
Them back to love and duty, ere the curse
All self-imposed, came forth to scatter them
Throughout the distant nations of the earth,
And leave in ghastly ruin, the one spot
To them and to their children all, most dear.

And Jesus wept! 'Tis said He never smiled
In all the years He wandered here, to bind
The hearts so broken, cleanse the souls so foul,
And heal the sick, sad-hearted, weary ones
Who gladly sought His healing touch of love.
Rebellious children of the Most High God
Flaunted their foul corruption in the face
Of heaven, and made God's dwelling place a den
Of robbers!

It was this that made Him weep
Those tears of love and pity, as He went
To plead yet once again, with those He came
To save, ere time should come (now drawing near),
Which brought its scourge of desolation.

Once
Again He cried, "Jerusalem! O thou
"Who stoned and killed the Prophets in thy rage,
"I would have gathered thee as doth the hen
"Her tender brood, and made thee all My Own.
"Ye would not hear My Voice, and now behold
"The curse of desolation on thee rests!

" All, all this goodly pile shall be thrown down,
" Nor stone shall be upon another left!
" The flower of thine offspring shall go forth
" With bye-word, and with hissing, and with curse"!

He wept because He saw that ruin lay
In wait, until the time should come wherein
All prophecy should be fulfilled, and tears
Would take the place of laughing pride and joy
With which the city rang in careless glee.
And not for these alone. He saw beyond,
Far down the track of time, how gathering sin
Of generations then unborn, would swell
The mighty torrent of the world's full crime,
And wash the earth with blood!

He wept!

He wept for sins which then were all unknown;
The woeful sins whose rushing flood poured in
Upon His Heart, until it burst for grief
On that dread Cross, whereon His outstretched Arms
Would fain have blessed the world, as from a Throne!
He wept for us! And shall our eyes be dry
While yet the faithful voice within us, calls
To our remembrance all the slighted love
Of that great Heart, Who poured in streams of blood
A ransom for our souls?

O Earth! Earth! Earth!
Why go ye whirling on in mad carouse!
The Mighty Hand, the bleeding Form upon
The dripping Cross—High Watch-Tower of the World!—
But waits that from this murky vale of death
One sign of penitential grief may come
To ask the life which He alone can give.
O Earth! turn from thy revel dark and wild,
While yet the day of grace is found!
Thy tears
Shall win from Him who shed His tears for thee,
A Benediction of ETERNAL PEACE!